

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL FORUM

Arts & Entertainment **PAGE 3**
Forum previews the LHS Musical, *Rags*, which opens this Thursday

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The cast of *Rags* prepares for opening night, Thursday, November 19.

Photo by Josh Rudner

Lexington Students Do Their Homework, Globe Survey Says

Globe Survey ranks Lexington as first in the state on average time spent on homework.

KATE VOGEL
News Editor

According to a survey in a recent Boston Globe article, Lexington High School ranks first in the state out of the schools surveyed about the average nightly time spent on homework. The survey was given out to tenth graders who were asked to estimate how long they spent on homework per night. While in some high school districts such as Cambridge, Marlborough, and Springfield, less than six percent of the tenth graders surveyed reported spending three or more hours on homework a night, over thirty percent of the Lexington respondents did. Twelve percent of the Lexington students reported spending less than an hour on homework compared to 37 percent of Boston students and 43 percent of Springfield students.

To many educators the report was an indication of what is wrong with public schools today. In some school systems where students routinely skip homework assignments, many teachers have simply stopped assigning it. The Boston School Committee currently recommends two and a half hours of homework a night for high school students. Comparatively, the Lexington High School Student Handbook suggested that teachers assign homework that roughly equates the time spent in that class.

While there is little unanimity on exactly how much homework high school students should have, many adults have agreed that in too many school systems in Massachusetts more homework needs to be given. Some teachers have complained that parents need to take an active role in making sure that their children complete the assignments. Parents have countered that teachers and school administrators must be willing to hold their students responsible for not completing the assignments.

The numbers seem to indicate that Lexington High School may have escaped some of these tricky issues. In fact, with so many students reporting over three hours of homework a night, some have begun to wonder how much homework is too much. Student opinion on the amount of homework they get is very varied.

"It makes us look good," said senior Becky Dedrick on how Lexington's homework policy compares to the rest of the state.

"I think that our class time should be used more wisely so that we are not left with this ridiculous amount of homework," offered senior Lien DeBrouckere. Asked how long she spends on homework, DeBrouckere replied, "It depends on the year; it depends on the teacher. Last year I had about

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School Renovations Go To Vote On December 7th

RACHEL ASQUITH
Staff Writer

On December 7th Lexington's newest plan for school renovation will come to a town-wide vote. The renovation plans include renewing roofs, windows, and heating systems, reconfiguring classrooms, and trying to maximize existing space. The new plan is a less costly version of the approximately \$69 million plan rejected by voters last year. However, the cost of shaping up the schools, even under the new plan still amounts to around \$54 million dollars.

One of the heartiest supporters of the new proposal, Selectmen Peter Enrich commented, "This is a very different vote than last year. The town has really come together and put together a plan that has

widespread support from across the spectrum. This is really an affordable plan that meets the critical needs of the secondary schools."

Other individuals in town have indicated that the new plan is still too costly. Proponents of the referendum point out if the proposal passes this year, state funds will foot 59% of the project cost, leaving Lexingtonians to cover only \$22.1 million (\$37.4 million with interest). Also, the proposed property tax increase is in the form of a debt exclusion act, which, unlike an override, is only a temporary increase in taxes. This increase will remain in effect for twenty-five years, finally costing each taxpayer \$877 per every \$100,000 of property.

If the plan does pass, students

can expect to see major renovations for Lexington High School, and Clark and Diamond Middle Schools. Renovations for the High School claim the largest portion of funds; about \$26.3 million would be spent on LHS alone. Of the remaining funds, \$13.7 million would be spent on Diamond and \$8.6 million on Clarke.

One of the most drastic changes for the High School would be the addition of a new library/media center located off G-house and extending into the senior quad. Other key renovations include the reconfiguration of classrooms, which would mean better corridor connections within buildings, and the extension of several science labs.

For all three schools, many of the renovations are proposed to alleviate the potential for overcrowding. The net population of the three schools

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On the agenda: LHS Senate is busy organizing events and smoothing operations

TANAZ SHARIFNIA
News Editor

Only a few months into the school year, the LHS Student-Faculty Senate has been engaged in planning upcoming events and suggesting changes in school operation. Already in progress are plans for a Diversity Day in the spring and, as a continuation from last year's successful event, another school-wide CRUD Day, during which students and teachers alike clean up designated locations around the school.

This year, Senate has thus far organized the elections for student announcers

and for freshmen senators. It has also discussed ways to solve the problems concerning the chain of command between the School Council and the School Committee, such as having Senate and the School Council function as parallel bodies. In addition, Senate has developed a bill that expresses the terms for LHS School Council representation and election, namely that representatives be elected from the student body for a term of two years, and that there be at least one seat on School Council reserved for a senator.

According to Abbe Barg, the Secretary of Senate, one of the most important goals of this year is to get more students involved in Senate. "We're looking for more people to come to the meetings. Students have a lot of say, especially concerning open campus and parking issues," she says. In order to attain this goal, members have been frequently updating the Senate bulletin board in the main hall and making announcements to better inform the student and faculty body of the occurrences of Senate.

Another focus this year in Senate has

been on improving the quality of campus life. There has been talk about an honor code for the school, for example. Moreover, improvements in the appearance of the school, such as painting murals in the bathrooms, have been discussed.

Says Barg of the hopes for the rest of the year, "Senate is the students' voice and not many have taken advantage of it. We hope that this year many more people will utilize this opportunity to speak out about what they don't like or believe is unfair."

Feature: Politics of School Renovation

Bharat Ramamurti continues his series of interviews with Lexington political groups on the issue of school renovations. This issue, he speaks with Steven Tripi and Perry Pollins.

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On Chadwick's Closing

A landmark on Waltham Street closes. Maggie Allan is on the scene, reviewing the closing and future plans for the site.

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The Waterboy

Adam Sandler made another movie. And we reviewed it. Brennan Igoe gives us the inside scoop to this complex cinematic production.

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Boys' Cross Country Captures League Meet

Continuing their undefeated season, Boys' Cross Country claims first place in the league meet.

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THE RENOVATIONS CONTROVERSY RENEWED

BHARAT RAMAMURTI
Editorials Editor

With the town vote on the school proposal only a month away, both the proponents and the opponents are buckling down for the stretch run. After interviewing an advocate for the current \$59 million proposal, Ira Bernstein, for the last issue, Forum decided to get the opposing perspective. We talked to Steven Tripi and Perry Pollins, co-chairmen of the Citizens for Responsible Spending (CRS)—a tax watchdog group that Pollins describes as "a collection of about 200 people, not as well-organized as the opposition...almost grassroots in comparison." Despite these disadvantages, CRS has been very active in propagating its perspective to the townspeople of Lexington.

Pollins and Tripi disagree with the very premise of the proposal: that the schools need fixing of any kind. Tripi went as far as to say that "this school looks like a palace compared to the place I went to school." He believes that the conditions of the school do not affect a teacher's ability to instruct his students whatsoever.

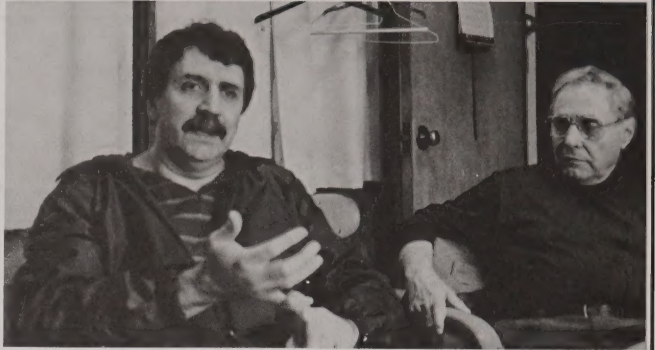
Pollins and Tripi did agree with Bernstein's assessment that if the schools are not fixed now, it will cost more to fix them later. However, Pollins argues that the current method of financing the renovations, a real estate tax, is "blatantly wrong," because it places an unbearable tax burden on senior citizens. "Senior citizens will be run out of town," he argues, "...people with more than one income or a very large income who have a very expensive house, pay 7.5 percent of their income in real estate taxes. A senior citizen who owns a \$300,000 house who has a pension or social security income of \$45,000 will pay 12-13 percent of their income in real estate taxes. That's unfair." Pollins would advocate the current proposal if it were funded through an income tax or a sales tax, a method that is being looked into in Michigan, Kentucky, Maine, and New Hampshire. Such a tax would distribute the burden more proportionately.

However, such a tax would have to be passed at the state level, the occurrence that Pollins sees as "very unlikely."

Tripi went on to argue that everyone in the town would feel the effect of the override. He warned that "[the override] will be a disaster financially, for the taxpayers and for the town. There will probably be another override because this is only Phase I—this is only three schools, and there are nine schools total. So they are throwing all their money into these three schools thinking that down the road people are going to come up with more money. Well, they may be in for hard times because there may not be more money. And those other schools may even get more run down, because there is no money. I would see future overrides really failing when people see the tax burden of this one."

Unlike Bernstein, who attributes the school maintenance problem to a lack of funds, Tripi and Pollins blame the current conditions on mismanagement of funds. Eighty-five percent of the town's budget goes towards the schools, compared to the 20 percent given to them fifty years ago. Therefore, they argue, it can't be that the schools are not getting enough money. According to Pollins, over the years the funds allocated by the School Committee for maintenance and repair have been used instead for other purposes. Basically, they have misspent the money," says Tripi, "the teachers' union has run away with the store. They get every raise they want. They're getting a 10.5 percent [raise] over the next three years. If you want some money to divert to fix the schools you say to those teachers, 'you might get [a two percent raise] this year, we've got to fix the schools.'"

Furthermore, Tripi does not see this as a one-shot deal. Assuming that the current trend of money mismanagement continues, Tripi predicts that in ten to fifteen years the school will be needing another overhaul. He simply cannot see the schools keeping its promise to cut costs. "How serious do you think [the schools] are about saving mon-



Steven Tripi and Perry Pollins, at CRS

Photo by Josh Rudner

ey when they just put in \$93,000 worth of toilets?," he asked, referring to the installation of new toilets at Diamond Middle School and Harrington Elementary School.

Not only do Tripi and Pollins take issue with the actual proposal, they also take issue with the way in which the town politicians have handled the issue. They claim the schools have violated campaign finance laws by passing out flyers to students on school stationery that advise parents to vote in favor of the override. Furthermore, the School Committee home page on the Internet says "Support the Override," which Tripi cites as another violation, as well as an "utter disgrace." Pollins added "there is a good possibility that win, lose, or draw, that if we find that [the schools] did violate campaign finance laws like they did last year...and if we have sufficient evidence to that effect, we will consult a lawyer about initiating a class-action suit [against the School Committee and the Schools]."

Furthermore, Tripi, Pollins, and a number of town residents have accused the politicians of deceiving the public about the actual cost of the proposal to the taxpayer. It was reported by the School Committee, the town Selectmen, the Lexington Coalition,

the Lexington Minuteman, and even in Forum, that the cost to the taxpayer would be approximately 22 million dollars. However, that figure did not include the interest on the loan that would build up over the next 25 years. The real figure, according to Pollins, is \$37.4 million. Tripi sees this sort of action as "typical" of the "undemocratic nature" of the establishment.

Tripi concluded by saying, "Mr. Pollins and I have never been invited to anything in this town. We have never been invited to serve on any committee. We were not invited to serve on the Ad Hoc committee...Town meeting is the problem...a lot of those people are not well-meaning. A lot of those people will take our money because they are affiliated with teacher unions and labor unions, and that's what we're up against. And as long as [Mr. Pollins] and I are here, we're minding the store. And if they think they can roll over us this time with this proposal, they're wrong."

Mr. Tripi and Mr. Pollins have made no secret of the fact that they intend to put up a fight for responsible spending. As the tension builds and deadlines approach, the arguments continue. Pollins and Tripi will make their voices heard.

Cellucci Win Seen to Impact Teachers, Students

JACKIE OU
Staff Writer

Because of his recent win for the office of Massachusetts governor, Paul Cellucci will continue to have a large impact on education in Massachusetts.

Defeating Scott Harshbarger in a slim 50.8% to 47.4% win this month, Republican Cellucci has made continued education reform one of the top priorities on his agenda. Teacher development, current teacher testing, and strengthening of standards have been named by Cellucci as imminent and important steps to be taken in his current second term.

Although Cellucci has been called a teacher-basher in the past, he hopes to change this image of his education views. Indeed, rather than discouraging teachers, he told the Boston Globe, "I think that teaching is the most important job in our city." Cellucci has promised 4,000 new teachers in the next year. And he hopes not only to complete the last part of the existing education reform program (which has cost over \$1 billion), but also spend even more to further encourage both students and teachers in Massachusetts.

After the last year's first state teacher testing, in which 59% of prospective teachers failed, Cellucci has expressed a desire for a higher regard and standard for teachers to ensure better quality in Massachusetts schools. Last week Cellucci set up a stricter teacher testing program for new and current teachers. The proposal passed the school board last week, and has been received with mixed emotions by many in the education field.

Cellucci also plans to fund scholarships through the state universities to students who agree to become teachers and teach in Massachusetts for 4 years. And not only

should teachers be competent in the classroom, but a higher standard for students should be held up, Cellucci says. Students will be encouraged to go into the teaching profession, and recruiting of top students into the teaching area will be a top priority.

It is clear to see that many current and aspiring Massachusetts teachers may be angered by the tightening standards that Cellucci has proposed, but how do students feel about this education reform agenda?

Many students here have clearly expressed a feeling of relief. To Cellucci's new teacher standards, sophomore Dina Yanushpolsky said, "Good. They're finally getting rid of all those stupid...teachers."

Others doubted Cellucci's promises in the financial aspect, agreeing with House Speaker Thomas Finnerman, who argues that the state will not be able to fund the reform program this year. Pointing out that Cellucci also made a promise of a \$1 billion tax cut, sophomore Joo-Hee Chung questioned whether both promises will truly be carried out. "I think [the education reforms] are a good idea, but Cellucci has to look at it more realistically. He can't just go around making outrageous promises like that," she said.

And there are also some hard-core Democrats, who reacted negatively towards not only the promised education reform, but to Cellucci himself. "Cellucci?" asked sophomore Liza Dickinson. "He's a hypocrite. He defamed Scott Harshbarger [on television]," she said.

Cellucci is hoping that the new standards and increased education budget will go into effect within the next year, and there will certainly be more controversy surrounding the education issue in the coming months.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF

Freshman Class Council Decides on New Activities for the Year

The Freshman Class Council has lined up several project ideas for the upcoming school year, including those for a freshman class ski trip, swing dance and special social gatherings called "coffee hours." Lisa Park, elected president of the Freshman Class Council in October, has expressed enthusiasm about these proposals. She hopes that this year will be exciting and fun for all freshmen. To raise funds for these projects, Park and Vice President Carly Ryan, Treasurer Daniel Wang and Secretary Meryl Slotkin, collaborating with teacher advisor Martha Queenin, are considering organizing car washes that would boost freshman involvement by encouraging voluntary participation.

Class Council hopes that this year's activities will sound original and appealing to freshmen. The Council believes their idea for a swing dance is unprecedented. If executed, big band music would replace the overplayed popular rock of usual dances, and jitterbugging would in theory suspend hip-hop dancing, head banging and disco grooving for the night. "Coffee hours," a series of before-school socials, would allow freshmen to chat and sip Starbucks coffee in the morning while listening to a student band.

The Freshman Class Council's informal "majority rules" voting will decide upon activity proposals. Freshmen are encouraged to offer their ideas for activities by contacting one of the Class Council officers.

Future of School Renovations Proposal To Be Decided December 7th

RENOVATIONS, Continued from page 1 presently rests at 2,923 students, but is expected to rise to around 3,740 in the next decade.

Student reaction has been mixed. Upset about the proposed building extension into the senior quad, senior Katherine Fisher stated, "Yuck! I'm glad I'm not going to be there. I love the senior quad. Still, I would rather not have an overcrowded school."

"I don't know...I think it's good to expand the school for future classes that enter Lexington High School but it would be an inconvenience for people already in the

school," sophomore Jia Han said, referring to the presence of temporary classrooms and blocked off construction areas that could be present while the renovations got underway. "I guess I do [hope it passes] because it's for the well-being of the school's future."

Senior Holly Arthur supports efforts to fix up the High School. "In general I am not in favor of large amounts of tax spending," she said, "but in the case of Lexington High School I think [the school] could use all the help it could get. It's really an issue of student welfare."

Rags: Theatrical Preview of LHS's Fall Musical

By: Molly Powers and Hallie Gnatovich

Envision yourself in the dank hold of a massive steel ship, enfolded by a cramped flock of strangers. Behind each face is a story of persecution, of a dream, and of this dubious realization of that dream. Try to imagine the stench of stale sea air, filthy bodies, and spoiled food constantly gnawing at your nostrils, accompanied by the familiar wails of infants and moans of the feeble. Suddenly, the joyful cry of "Land!" rings out over the decks, and all discomfort is forgotten as you gaze at the endless horizon, absorbing the sights and sounds of your new home.

So, what's all this about Fiddler on the Roof, you ask? What is the school musical anyway? Rags, written by Joseph Stein, with music and lyrics by Charles Strous and Stephen Schwartz, is similar to Fiddler in that they both focus on the life and times of a struggling Jewish community. Contrary to rumor, however, the char-

acters of, as the audience will learn, are independent of any other story. In short, you don't have to have seen Fiddler to come and enjoy Rags.

Opening with a wave of immigrants approaching America, Rags proceeds to follow the intertwined lives of many characters as they discover the realities of life in the slums of New York City. Most of the roles in Rags are Russian Jews, many of whom are escaping anti-semitic oppression and attack by Pogroms, organized raids on national minorities. Fleeing from the frequent Cossack riots in her hometown, Rebecca Hershkowitz, played by Elizabeth Shapiro, hopes to reunite with her husband Nathan (Raki Sastri) in America. Making the voyage with her is her 10-year-old son David, played by Clark Middle Schooler Aram Demirjian, and along the way Rebecca befriends 17-year-old Bella Cohen (Sara Ris) a naive idealist with a fondness for love-struck Ben Levitowitz (Jonah Mitropoulos). Avram Cohen, Bella's

orthodox father, played by Garrett Blair, disapproves of her escapades with Ben and Rebecca whom he feels are bad influences on his daughter. Yet when Nathan fails to meet Rebecca at the gates of Ellis Island, and she and David are in danger of being sent home to Russia, Avram agrees to vouch for their custody.

The days that follow turn Rebecca's life upside down, as she begins working in a sweatshop to earn money for David and herself, which subsequently inspires the cabin-feverish Bella (confined by her father to sew at home) to seek work in a factory. Rachel (Rachel Bachner), a streetwise woman determined to win the heart of Avram, offers to help him raise his headstrong daughter. When, at last, Rebecca locates Nathan, she learns that he has become a party worker for the Irish Democrat Big Tim Sullivan (Dan Ronco), who plans to use Nathan to garner votes from the Jewish community in the next election. Nathan is now in direct contrast to another man in Rebecca's life,

Saul. Played by Ari Vigoda, Saul has been trying to persuade Rebecca and the other sweatshop workers to stand up to the cruel factory bosses, and demand satisfactory wages, hours, and safety conditions.

During the finale, the audience may experience a brief *deja vu*, as the immigrant chorus files into their original opening positions on the boat, and the opening number, "Greenhorns," echoes the past. Intentionally blocked to resemble the introduction, the finale is designed to leave the viewer with the realization of a circle come full term. This story is only one of thousands in the dramatic lives of courageous immigrants, and the story is still being told today.

That's all great, but is the show gonna be any good? Is it worth my eight dollars? Well, the 45 member cast has been working hard since the second week of school to blow your mind away. Director Steve Bogart specifically chose Rags because of its unique "cinematic" atmosphere. RAGS Continued on page 3

Movie Review: 'The Waterboy'

BRENNAN IGOE

Staff Writer

Well, Adam Sandler certainly has another hit. The Waterboy is now the number one movie in the country, but is it there with good reason? Unlike his last two movies, Happy Gilmore and The Wedding Singer, which were witty, quick-witted movies with most of the jokes coming from excellent writing and directing, The Waterboy fails to continue this tradition. Most of the humor in the movie comes from Adam Sandler talking in one of his funny voices about his sequestered life out in the boon-docks of Louisiana, or from Sandler sacking a quarterback into the ground or getting revved up before doing so. Now there is nothing wrong with good old slapstick comedy - often it can be the funniest type and enjoying it requires little or no thought at all. However, when a movie is based almost entirely on the idea that seeing a dysfunctional little waterboy tackle much bigger players like they were nothing is funny, one wonders if this movie deserves to be the top movie in the country.

Bobby Boucher (Adam Sandler), a thirty-one year old waterboy who lives

with his overprotective Mama (Kathy Bates) and enjoys serving high quality H₂O. Mama Boucher has kept him away from society for fear of losing him and as a result, Bobby remains quite the social misfit. Constantly abused by the football players to whom he serves the water, he bottles up all the resulting anger inside himself. After he is fired from his first waterboy job, Coach Klein, Bobby's new coach (Henry Winkler) realizes that Bobby is able to release this pent-up rage against the other team on the football field. Bobby now becomes a losing team's star linebacker and its ticket to victory. At the same time, Bobby's woman friend, Vicki Vallengourt (Fairuza Balk), is released from jail and wants to be a part of Bobby's changing life. Bobby has to play football and have a relationship with Vicki, all behind his disapproving mama's back.

The plot has its merits, and the movie will certainly make you laugh, but Sandler's annoying voice and the repetitiveness of the jokes detract from the overall value of the movie. The Waterboy is a funny movie, and I would recommend seeing it at matinee or at someone else's expense.

Supposed Former Infatuation Junkie, Alanis Morissette: A Mature Little Pill

JEANIE GARLOFSKY

Staff Writer

Alanis was a virtually unknown artist in the United States before 1995, however, in a few short weeks that year, she burst upon the music scene with an album that sold 16 million copies, making it the 12th biggest-selling album of all time. Not only did she win a huge fan following, but she was also praised by the critics and went on to win four Grammy awards. Oh, and she was only 21 at the time.

Modern-day Cinderella story? Not quite. Rather, this is just a brief excerpt from the life of musician Alanis Morissette, which does sound somewhat like a Disney-esque fairy tale... Beautiful princess Alanis with an amazing voice wins over the masses and gets her prize-in this case a huge amount of fans and amazing commercial success.

Still, Alanis and her music are both quite far from Disney and fairy tales. After all, her musical reputation is based on the raw honesty and emotional, primal power of the songs on her first album, *Jagged Little Pill*. The candor and charisma of this album are still very much present on Alanis' sophomore release, *Supposed Former Infatuation Junkie*. Released on November third, the album was highly anticipated, partly because Alanis has always been publicity-shy and has not done much work since *Jagged Little Pill* three years ago, leaving her fans clamoring for more. Fortunately, Alanis' second album does not

disappoint.

Supposed Former Infatuation Junkie is a more complex album than Alanis' first effort. There is a wide variety in the styles of the 17 songs, ranging from the fast, eerily conversational "Front Row" to the beautiful, haunting melody of "That I Would Be Good." At first, the medley of the songs on *Junkie* seems almost intimidating, even to a dedicated Alanis fan. As a result of the large number and the diversity of the songs, one must listen to the album several times through to begin to comprehend and appreciate it.

Luckily, learning to understand this album is a fascinating and enjoyable process. Many of the tracks on *Junkie* are plainly very autobiographical. On "UR," Alanis speaks of the difficulties that come along with her youthful success, "do you realize guys I was born in 1974/terrified you are ahead of your time you are." Also, many of the songs on *Junkie* like many of the tracks off of Alanis' first album, deal with love and the pain that comes along with a relationship. The intimacy of the lyrics, the feeling of being part of someone else's memory and heart, lasts for the duration of the album's listening time and makes Alanis' CD so incredibly memorable.

According to Billboard Magazine, the album sold more than 85,000 copies in its first day alone, an extremely strong showing. With these kind of sales, and with the publicity that preceded the release of this great album, Alanis' fairy-tale rise to success shows no signs of slowing down.

The Apostle (1997)

A revealing portrayal of a zealous Southern evangelist on the run from the law, *The Apostle* attempts to trace the life of the protagonist, filled with ever-increasing levels of paradoxes. However, despite a spirited performance by Robert Duvall as Sonny, a fervidly emotive preacher who seeks refuge in a small town after committing a crime of passion, the film wastes the talents of its other actors, delegating them to inconsequential supporting roles. All-too-often, the film becomes mired in its own sentimentality, disregarding its more profound themes in favor of cursory and unimaginative ploys to garner viewer interest. This lack of originality in plot not only burdens the fluidity of the action, but also culminates to a point which makes *The Apostle* seem like little else than a missed opportunity for insight into the deeply ingrained Southern religious mentality. Indeed, by attempting to build an aesthetically pleasing plot around its characters, the film compromises the very themes and thought-provoking ideas most essential to its script.

Despite the film's flaws, it is impossible to overlook Duvall's talent not only as an actor, but also as a writer and director as well which ultimately save the picture. Duvall's visually engaging religious ravings are the highlights of the film, giving *The Apostle* a certain emotional depth as well as a touch of humor. The character of Sonny is made especially interesting by Duvall's defiance of widely held misconceptions concerning eccentric Southern preachers, as well as his flair for the unexpected. As *The Apostle* progresses, Sonny begins to take form as the film's most amiable character, and his appeals to religious followers become increasingly gripping. As Sonny comes to be loved by the townsfolk as a personal savior in his own right, Duvall's acting becomes especially moving. In fact, many of the Duvall's most poignant scenes are so convincing that oftentimes they themselves are enough to lift *The Apostle* from its onerous undertones and elevate the film to an effective level of depth and complexity.

-Ignacio De La Huerta

Diamonds in the rough: Video Picks

2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)

Upon one's first superficial impression, *2001: A Space Odyssey* appears to be a horribly boring and ridiculous film. There seems to be no apparent plot, the ending makes no sense, and the events take place so slowly that one might speculate that the 139-minute movie could be condensed into a one-hour TV show. However, this 1968 film causes the viewer to do something rarely achieved by today's films of special effects galore - that is think. A great book does not merely lay all the cards on the table telling the casual passerby what to think; rather, the best ones are those that lay only a few cards out, and allow the observer the opportunity to determine what the entire deck is like. In this respect, *2001* is like a great book, since the scenes and underlying meanings are not clean cut, but thought provoking.

The film begins with a group of ape-men that are starving to death. All of a sudden a mysterious black monolith appears out of the sky, and the eerie music begins. This image appears several times, in each instance denoting a significant event in the film. From the ape-men to modern men, the monolith brings about evolutionary change; this film has been described as "enigmatic evolutionary eye candy," since it basically depicts the evolution of mankind.

From the eerie flesh tones to the powerful use of music (remember *A Clockwork Orange*)? it is apparent that auteur Stanley Kubrick deftly manipulated the movie. Despite the minimal amount of speech in the film, the usage (or lack) of music and sounds in certain scenes greatly enhances the piece. Perhaps, the most famous example of this is the opening song, played in accordance with the ape-man's discovery of a powerful tool.

In general, some people may hate the film, however, if you wish to watch a film that will cause you to undergo a mind-boggling experience, than *2001: A Space Odyssey* is highly recommended. In the words of Kubrick himself, "You're free to speculate as you wish about the philosophical and allegorical meaning of the film."

-Tom Lin

The Manchurian Candidate (1962)

A provocative merger of science fiction, action, and political drama, John Frankenheimer's film, *The Manchurian Candidate*, vividly captures the era's Cold War paranoia and political suspicions with unrivaled originality. Laurence Harvey plays Sergeant Raymond Shaw, an unsuspecting Korean War veteran brainwashed by Chinese communists in an attempt to create the perfect assassin. However, despite the visual intensity of many scenes, the film is never reduced to a formulaic action flick. On the contrary, its strength lies in its scrutiny of Shaw's psychological turmoil and the sordid emotional manipulations of his mother, played convincingly by Angela Lansbury.

Thematically, *The Manchurian Candidate* is thoroughly enthralling; the film offers a glimpse of the factors that delve relentlessly into the psyche of Sergeant Shaw, revealing his inner destruction by forces beyond his control. Frankenheimer's vision of Shaw's emotional decay is conveyed in part by the film's haunting dream sequences, which also serve to epitomize the insidious nature of the era's political philosophy. Much of this film's novelty, in fact, lies in its acerbic satire of this philosophy. The film attacks with great vigor the pomp and hypocrisy of the political witch-hunts of the time and successfully incorporates their long-reaching effects into the drama. The movie is most effective, perhaps, because it neither vilifies Shaw nor portrays him as the unwitting victim of psychological experimentation. Rather, Shaw is a product of the mutual fear and hatred of conflicting ideologies, a mere pawn in the international struggle for power.

The Manchurian Candidate endeavors to scrutinize many weighty issues, and its examination of the factors constantly shaping Shaw's subconscious make it a wholly satisfying film. The film's thematic and visual richness, as well as the controversy upon its release concerning its political satire, reveal Frankenheimer's talent as a director and make *The Manchurian Candidate* one of the American Film Institute's top one hundred films of all time.

-Ignacio De La Huerta

CROSSFIRE: On Affirmative Action

NICK BARNABY
Contributing Editor

"Affirmative Action is race discrimination." "Affirmative Action excludes more qualified applicants." "Affirmative Action is a Band-Aid solution."

All these arguments may be correct, but they ignore the most important issue. Affirmative Action in high level education truly works. It gets minorities into elite colleges and universities that they would otherwise not have had the opportunity to attend.

The debate about affirmative action has been heated for decades, with both sides citing numberless studies and reports to evidence their claims. However, most of this debate and analysis has occurred on a theoretical level. The arguments advanced on each side bank on an appeal to absolutes and morals with proponents and opponents alike resorting to generalizations and platitudes. These arguments are all based on a theoretical plane because there was no opportunity to study a system where affirmative action had existed and then been revoked—until 1996, when Proposition 209 in California passed and banned all race bias in college admissions, leaving the entire University of California system void of affirmative action.

Since then, the number of minorities admitted has plummeted a ridiculous amount. The same occurred in the Texas system in the wake of a similar law. A true cynic would argue that those kids didn't deserve to go. That, however, is just wrong. Eight hundred of those denied applicants had a 4.0 grade-point average or over. These students were no slouches but still were kept out of some of the nation's finest institutions.

When the playing field is left unlevelled, the education game appears rigged against minorities. That is potentially disastrous.

The institutions of higher education are America's gateway to success and the upper portion of society. By locking out minorities from these learning opportunities, universities are effectively stripping minorities of their ability to penetrate the upper class, reinforcing race and class lines and furthering the cycle of poverty. In the end, this practice effectively eliminates the American dream by destroying upward mobility between classes.

Moreover, the results of affirmative action at the highest level colleges have been astonishing. Minorities who would not have attended otherwise are outperforming their white counterparts in obtaining leadership positions in civic activities. Furthermore, over 40% of minorities who attended elite colleges went on to receive professional degrees (such as PhDs and degrees in law, business and medicine). Obviously, these students are not inherently less qualified students, they just have not had the opportunity to compete on a level playing-field. Once given equal opportunity, they are just as successful as their classmates.

Affirmative action in colleges and universities is not a perfect system. Nor is it a perfect solution. A system that is completely race-neutral and fair would be preferable to artificially correcting the playing field. Unfortunately, that system would exclude minorities from the top colleges and thus from the highest level of society. The best solution would be one that pushes not pulls. That is, a system that works from the root of the problem, attacking the systemic flaws with our educational and economic system rather than with an affirmative action program which attempts to correct the problem after 18 years of bias. This system, however, is the best thing we've got now and cannot be abandoned simply because of these flaws. It has to be continued in order to keep society moving in the right direction.

CHUCK HOWE
Associate Editor

Discussions of affirmative action (referring here to the granting of preferential treatment in hiring, admission, etc.) are generally characterized more by emotion than reason. As advocates both pro and con invoke the likes of King, Jefferson, and Locke in defense of their respective positions, the issue in question is quickly buried beneath a sizable accumulation of rhetorical deception. Thus, as objection yields outcry, and as outcry yields rage, the quest for truth is consumed by the pursuit of dominance, and the debate becomes its own topic. In the interest therefore of salvaging from this chaos the truth that was its original goal, it is necessary to peel back the layers of irrationality with the only tool available, logic.

In the mission statement of Americans United for Affirmative Action (AUAA), a typical statement made by affirmative action supporters, Martin Luther King III proclaims that, "affirmative action programs remain vital safeguards for protecting equal opportunity and are our nation's best tools for removing the roadblocks of ... discrimination." This statement, when broken down into its constituent parts, is found to be inaccurate.

The first claim, that "affirmative action programs remain vital safeguards for ...equal opportunity," is unfounded. Most affirmative action programs, on an immediate level, operate precisely by eliminating equal opportunity. Indeed, the AUAA, along with countless other pro-affirmative action groups, has expressed opposition to measures like The Civil Rights act of 1997 (HR 1909), which would "Provide...equal protection of the law and...prohibit discrimination and preferential treatment on the

basis of race, color, national origin, or gender", and California's Proposition 209, which provided that "The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin ...". If equal opportunity is a fundamental human right, then affirmative action is a clearly unethical.

The second claim, that "affirmative action programs" are "our nation's best tools for removing the roadblocks of ... discrimination", is founded in the belief that minorities are inherently disadvantaged. This belief is malformed. Minorities do in fact perform poorly on standardization tests when compared to their white counterparts (compare the 70 of 106,000 African Americans nationwide who scored over 700 on the SAT verbal section last year to the 41 of 340 LHS students who did so), and are indeed less successful in the business world (97 percent of Fortune 1000 CEOs are white). However, this evidence is co-relational, not causal. While discrimination certainly exists, its impact upon performance is far less significant than the impact of economics. Because schools in America are funded primarily by local property taxes, and because property value is quite low in the urban centers where most minorities live, the education received by most minorities is relatively poor, as evidenced by these statistics. This poor education, of course, leads to poor test grades and low professional achievement. However, there is no evidence that poor black students perform significantly worse than their poor white neighbors. Thus, it can be concluded that the "best tool" for removing "discriminatory roadblocks" is not affirmative action but economic assistance.

Hate Crimes - Government Action Necessary

JEANIE GORLOVSKY
Staff Writer

How does homophobia start? Like other types of hate, homophobia starts at home, when parents tell their kids to "stay away from those fags." Friends can encourage intolerance by labeling two girls hugging as "freakin' dykes." Hatred of gays can even begin in church; a Southern Baptist church runs a website, "godhatesfags.com," that labels gays, as well as Jews and other groups of people, "abominations to God-d and sinners. And, school can be a breeding ground for homophobia; even in our liberal high school, vandals tore down most of the display for Gay History Month in October.

And, then, how does homophobia end? Posters torn down show an ugly side of our student body that many people try to ignore, but unfortunately torn posters are hardly the most serious acts of hate against queer (gay/lesbian/bisexual/ transgendered) people in our society. Each year, hundreds of people are verbally and physically assaulted simply because of their sexual orientation. In some communities, even a small suggestion of homosexuality is enough to provoke a severe beating.

One of these homophobic communities is the small college town of Laramie, Wyoming. In a Laramie bar in October, two men, Russell Henderson and Aaron McKinney, picked up a gay college student, 21-year old Matthew Shepard, and got him inside their pickup truck. They then started to pistol-whip Shepard until his skull collapsed. The two men finished their grisly task on the outskirts of town, where they tied Shepard to a fence, burned part of his body, and left him to freeze. Shepard was discovered the following morning in a coma; he died in a Colorado hospital several days after the attack.

The tragedy of Matt Shepard's death has awakened many people to the reality of hate crimes that happen every day in the United States. In fact, according to federal government data, 8579 hate crimes were reported in 1996. Even more alarmingly, in an October TIME/CNN poll, 68% of people said that an attack like the one in Wyoming could happen in their community.

With an increased awareness of violence against gays, there has been much talk of the government "doing something" about this problem. In 40 states, there is already legislation making violence against someone because of his or her race, religion, or nationality a "hate crime"; hate crimes carry additional penalties in court, such as increased jail time for the perpetrator. In some states, people have been fighting to add sexual orientation to the list of things that are considered in "hate crimes" laws. On the national level, almost a year ago in the US House of Representatives, Representative Schumer introduced a bill called the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1997" (H.R. 3081). This act would make it illegal to "willfully cause body injury to any person...because of actual or perceived: race, color, religion, ... national origin... religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability of any person..." The act would also make grants to state and local programs to prevent juvenile hate crimes. Unfortunately, the act would only apply to crimes where the federal government had jurisdiction, such as when the crime involved interstate or foreign commerce. Also, this act is being kept from discussion on the floor of the House by congresspeople such as Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, who recently compared homosexuality to kleptomania. For now, it is apparent that the fight to make violence against gays will have to take place at the state level.

What is apparent is that many people sup-

port hate crime legislation to protect gays. In the TIME/CNN poll, 76% of people said that they favor the federal legislation to increase penalties for people who commit hate crimes against homosexuals. In addition, more than half of the people polled said that "homosexual relationships...are acceptable." Also, the Supreme Court has ruled that laws protecting gays do not violate free speech, as some opponents of hate crimes legislation have alleged.

Hate crime legislation is extremely important because it shows that the government and the people of the US will not turn a blind eye to the hundreds of violent anti-gay episodes that take place in this country each year. Most people would be appalled upon seeing a beating of an African-American youth; however, when the same thing hap-

pens to a homosexual youth, many individuals do not say or do anything, either because they do not care about homosexuals or because they are too scared to stand up to violent bullies. Making violence against gays carry increased court penalties will not completely stop the attacks, but it will certainly decrease the incidence of these crimes fueled by hate. It is our government's responsibility to make sure that no person is allowed to harm another and to institute hate crimes laws and changing existing laws to include crimes against gays is part of fulfilling this duty. If people demand that our government takes action, we will not be able to stop all homophobes, but we will be able to crack down on gay-related murders of innocent people and lessen the hate that exists in our society.

Why Forum?

In the beginning, Forum was created with the aspiration of bringing back a celebrated newspaper to Lexington High School. The Musket, at the end of our junior year, was not what it once was. The general impression of the current paper was not very positive. The students associated with the Musket complained that the writing for the newspaper had become a chore, something that they had to do, rather than something that they wanted to do. This attitude contributed to a general detritus in articles and in the paper as a whole.

But why not reform the Musket? Rather than argue that it was not possible, -- however true that may be -- let us explain why it was better to form a new paper at LHS. The existence of two student newspapers would foster competition,

making each paper better in its own right. Furthermore, it is far easier and quicker to accomplish changes by starting anew. Instead of working towards changes that might only take affect after we had left the high school, we could immediately bring about changes that we, and many others, saw as necessary. Starting a new paper left room for innovations, such as more underclass involvement, an arts and entertainment section, and hopefully, many more new ideas. We perceived that the rather restricting format of the Musket, which has evolved and hardened over time, hedged against such reform.

We hope you enjoy Forum. It isn't traditional or ordinary, but neither is LHS. -Bharat Ramamurti and Allen Riddell, Co-Founders, Forum.

The Recycling Riddle

VICTOR LELYVELD
Staff Writer

Practical supply-and-demand economics is the worst thing that ever happened to the environment. Recycling is a perfect example of this. Through an unlikely series of events, which included a conversation between my father and a garbage man, I one day discovered that our recycling company, Browning-Ferris Industries, does not always recycle 'recyclable' goods. Instead, those carefully sorted bins are sometimes dumped right into standard B.F.I. garbage trucks and shipped off to landfills as conventional trash. The reason for this has less to do with ignorance and more to do with economics.

Today, being an "environment-friendly" trash company is fashionable. They are no longer garbage companies, but now "waste management" companies. Indeed, recycling has been a large part in this "green" movement in the refuse industry. Since 1986, when California enacted the Beverage Container Recycling and Litter Reduction Act, the first law of its kind, recycling has been one of the most significant municipal environmental issues. This environmental precedent was then modeled in many states throughout the nation.

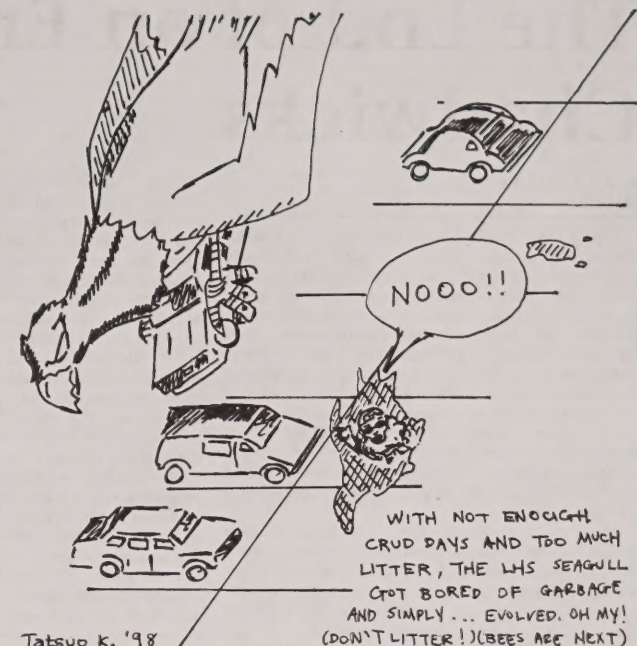
Despite popular support for recycling that has grown over the years, many people do not consider what happens to recyclable materials after they are collected. To oversimplify, recyclables are shipped to chemical plants where they are, in most cases, processed into reusable

materials (e.g. paper products, plastic and aluminum shards, etc.). The goal of all this, of course, is to reduce raw material consumption. However, many do not think it is working.

The chief reason may be simple supply-and-demand theory. If a municipality recycles, it increases the amount of material available for consumption. Indeed, this should not be happening: raw material suppliers should be forced to cut back their production to accommodate the influx of recycled materials into the market. But they are not necessarily doing this. Instead, they continue to produce at the same rate. In turn, the market becomes increasingly inflated, demand stays the same, prices drop, and the whole industry suffers. This scenario is especially detrimental for recycling companies, which by nature have higher overhead costs from chemical and other processing methods.

Despite popular support for recycling that has grown over the years, many people do not consider what happens to recyclable materials after they are collected

Thus, recycling companies, which often control all aspects of collection, processing, and distribution (such as B.F.I.), would be committing economic suicide by recycling every scrap of news-



paper that came their way. Unfortunately, it is in their best interests to fill landfills with waste that could otherwise be reused. Granted, the extent to which this is occurring is unknown and probably not measurable. But the fact that it could be happening at all is disturbing, and begs the question, how are we to deal with recyclable waste in an environmentally conscious fashion? In this case, the paradox prevents complete

reliance on recycling, and perhaps it could lead us back down the road of conservation. But even that course of action presents us with some other confounding puzzles. It seems clear that for the environment's sake—and for our own sake—something in our vaunted industrial system must give way. Such a change may never come, but for the time being, all we can do is to keep on sorting those bottles and cans.

From Generation X to Generation Tech

BEN ADAMS
Features Editor

It strikes me as unusual that no one ever has cause to wonder why the gaudy, cacophonous television station that occupies living rooms across the country is called MTV. As I'm told, MTV stands for Music Television, indicating that this would be a station that plays music. Oddly enough, most musically inclined couch potatoes turn their sets to VH1, and they do so for a fairly simple reason: MTV seems very hesitant to play music of any kind. Between death-defying sports that could only be practiced by individuals without regard for human life and interviews with celebrities whose goal seems to be setting a new standard for drug abuse, MTV only has time for about 3 hours of music on a given day.

As a pop culture cynic, I must fight the urge to take to cheap shots at the four different single-sex groups whose song and dance numbers continue to top the pop charts in spite of their absolute lack of any instrument save for the beat synthesizer. However, musical and cultural enthusiasts of all persuasions can concur

on one point: there is a state of cultural disunity in the late 1990's. No Led Zeppelin, The Beatles, or even Nirvana continues to produce music that everyone likes. As a cultural community, the teen market of today needs to come to the stark realization that while the 60's and 70's may be remembered for the British invasion, and the 80's for Michael Jackson's "Thriller," and Paula Abdul's "Straight Up," the only standing symbol of 90's culture is Beanie Babies.

As a cultural community, the teen market of today needs to come to the stark realization that while the 60's and 70's may be remembered for the British invasion, and the 80's for Michael Jackson's "Thriller," and Paula Abdul's "Straight Up," the only standing symbol of 90's culture is Beanie Babies.

Why the tragic downturn in cultural icons? Well, the age of technology is upon us. Marketing statistics continue to tell producers that bright col-

ors, synthetic beats and computer-generated graphics sell movies and music videos alike, regardless of the quality of the songwriting or screenplay. A rare class act like Eric Clapton's "Change the World," or Spielberg's "Saving Private Ryan" may force the world to appreciate true genius, but honestly, where do most of the dollars go? To the Spice Girls, MTV's Rock 'n' Jock, and "Titanic."

I must agree that there is unmistakable appeal in Puff Daddy's "Come With Me," and yes, I did almost go see "Godzilla." Still, when the discerning eye of hindsight is cast up on the late 90's, it will become known as a regrettable period. It is noteworthy, too, that many of the blockbuster movies and songs are remakes of smash hits of earlier decades. Both "Come With Me," a new edition of Led Zeppelin's "Kashmir," and "Godzilla" fall into this category, as does the re-release of the Star Wars trilogy. Puff Daddy's "Mo' Money Mo' Problems" steals its greatest assets from Diana Ross, and another Puff Daddy product, "I'll Be Missin' You," relies upon the musical talent of Sting and The Police. Digitally remastered versions of "Gone with the Wind" and "The Wizard of Oz" have both had spots at local theaters, too. And why shouldn't they? The polls are telling salespeople across the country that the greatest appeal lies in technological perfection.

So the Backstreet Boys and N'SYNC will go on moving their bleached heads to the beat, and producers will go on adding action-packed scenes to "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," and the 90's children will be happy. But don't come crying, kids, when you're called Generation Tech, because you got what you asked for.

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Forum welcomes student contributions. If you would like to write for the Forum, please contact Chuck Howe at (781) 788-9797. Forum reserves the right to edit or refuse contributions.

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Let your voice be heard.

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The End of an Era: Chadwicks

MAGGIE ALLAN
Staff Writer

Driving down Waltham Street, one can't help but notice the purple building's boarded windows and empty parking lot. What was once a bustling din of family fun and dining now stands vacant and lonely inside its desolate parking lot. This summer, after much thought and lamentation, owner John Adams closed the door of Chadwick's Ice Cream Parlour and Fine Foods restaurant for the last time. Current plans for the old building and lot are still being debated.

The restaurant's lease ran out in May. From that point until August, Adams had been renting the lot on monthly lease extensions. Adams says that the didn't want to rent out on a month-to-month basis and had no choice but to close. "I didn't have a choice -- I didn't have a lease."

The restaurant opened in May 1976. Until this summer, it had been serving hamburgers, hot dogs, steak fries, and ice cream. Birthday patrons received a free sundae, a drum roll, a loud and boisterous announcement and a stirring, restaurant-wide rendition of "Happy Birthday." Chadwick's was also known for its Belly Buster, "one of the largest sundaes in the world," whose massive weight was carried by two staggering employees, and accompanied by much fanfare.

The restaurant's decor was wall-to-wall antiques. An ancient wooden phone booth housed a modern phone and spare Superman costume. The younger customers got endless pleasure from the Seaburg Player, which could fill the entire restaurant with music for a mere quarter. And Adams' penny farthing bicycle, with one large and one small wheel, rested against a back window when Adams wasn't riding it in the Patriots Day parade.

On August 20th, Adams auctioned off his extensive antique collection, which once colored the restaurant.

"Buyers," noted Adams, "were split almost equally between professional restaurant people and former customers and employees that wanted to buy the memorabilia." Lexington High School students were among the buyers. Senior Josh Rudner says he went there because, "Chadwick's had been important to [him], and [he] wanted to keep a piece of it." He and fellow Forum editor Max Woolf kept more than just a piece, buying every booth in the restaurant for almost two hundred dollars. While he let the seating arrangements go, Adams chose to keep some items for himself, including the bicycle and a barber shop clock which displays the time backward for use in a mirror. "I kept some of the important pictures and signs," he adds, "The ones from the newspapers, the ones I was interested in."

The building and lot are owned by Fox & Hounds properties, which is based in Newton. Jamie McManus spoke on behalf of Fox & Hounds about its plans for the lot. It had been in his family for three generations, first as a hamburger stand called Mr. Hamburg's, and then as Brewster's, a restaurant similar in style to Chadwick's. McManus explains that an important reason for Fox & Hounds' decision to renovate the property is its poor condition. By rebuilding, says McManus, "a tremendous improvement to the property which is considered by the town of Lexington to be in poor condition, as it has been for quite some time. It's like anything that is falling into decrepit shape. You put something new there and it goes from being an eyesore to being something beautiful." Of course, he is now faced with the daunting task of finding an improvement worthy of the destruction of Chadwick's.

Plans for the new lot are of "absolute" importance to the real estate company. They include "a single story building with neighborhood shops," reports McManus. "It'd be newer with parking, grass in front and landscaping. We're even still working with Chadwick's."



Photo by Josh Rudner

The author attends to two adorable Forum editors.

Before plans move too far, Fox & Hounds needs to finish working out issues with the town. Adams points out, in regards to the lot, that Fox & Hounds "has to get it rezoned, because it isn't zoned commercially." Adams continues, "every four years I used to have to go before the board and they'd tell me I was doing a good job and I could stay. If [Fox & Hounds] tries to do anything else other than a restaurant [it will] have to get approval from the town."

Since August, Adams has been taking in life. "Cleaning up around the house, wallpapering, and [my family and I] went to Nova Scotia for two weeks." He isn't rushing to finalize any future plans for his restaurant. Patrons can take heart; all hope is not gone. When asked if he was thinking of re-opening on Waltham Street or another location, Adams lightheartedly says, "I'm not going to do anything until the summer. We'll see. Right now I want to relax, enjoy my dog and my family." Thanks for 20 wonderful years, John. The town will be waiting.

Forgotten Freshman Elections: should we reconsider priorities?

BEN COLLINS
Staff Writer

What is to blame for the scant number of candidates who ran in this year's freshman elections? Are we beginning an anti-government phase, or has planning dances on class council just lost its appeal? Many reasons account for our freshmen's lack of involvement in school politics. The most significant one is that freshmen, new to busy high school life, are worrying about a lot more than writing campaign posters or composing propaganda-laden statements. The beginning of freshman year has entailed a lot of hard choices in a small amount of time. Running for office seems to have blended in with chess club, EPIIC, Outing Club and the countless other choices swirling around a freshman's head. Some have chosen not to do extracurricular activities, others plan to add a few once they settle in, while many have just plain packed their schedules so full, they have barely enough time to do homework. After noticing the disappointing number of freshmen who initially ran for office, the Senate Elections Committee was wise to have nagged freshmen to fill the remaining candidacies. The freshman class will reap the benefits of being involved in school politics. Student gov-

ernment is one of the most respected and serious extracurricular activities offered at the high school, and it can also be the most rewarding. For LHS especially, the power of Senate is truly practical and useful. Thanks to the influential efforts of our senators, for example, students are now allowed to eat lunch outside and avoid cafeteria crowding.

Many freshmen, however, falsely perceive student government at LHS to be superficially based on popularity and involved only in the planning of dances. They are as well turned off to the idea of having to sacrifice X Blocks for meetings. This disinterest most likely decreased their number of committed, motivated candidates who ran for office. As an inevitable result, this year's freshmen will quite possibly be poorly represented in Senate and Class Council. Student politics may suffer, for Senate is a productive lawmaking body, just as the Board of Appeals is a fair grievance committee for dissatisfied students, only because motivated and involved students choose to make it that way. Without early information and the proper amount of time to think and plan, this year's freshman elections were unsuccessful. They are proof that freshmen have hit the wall: the reality of the high school's overwhelming number of choices has caught up to them.

Underclass Breathe!

ALYSSA ROSENBERG
Staff Writer

Isn't it awful when your parents are right? For years they've been telling you to prioritize, to choose only what you really want to do, to spend your time wisely. Because middle school offered a relatively limited variety of activities, your schedule then was rather free. After all, unless you played three sports, worked on the yearbook committee, participated in the chess club and starred in the musical, you had time for homework and a social life on the weekends. Life was simple, so you ignored your parents' warnings on time management. But now, suddenly, you've reached high school, and the truth becomes apparent. Your parents, in terms of time, know what they are talking about.

High school gives you a lot of opportunities--maybe even too many. At the very beginning of my freshman year, I was already a member of the Debate Team and the Gay/Straight Alliance. On top of that, I was taking kickboxing and swimming classes. When the activities fair rolled around, I caved into some of the urgings of my senior and junior friends to join clubs like mountain biking, OXFAM, Amnesty International, and Writer's Workshop. Now my life is busier than ever.

Some freshmen have even busier schedules than I. One of my friends plays on the JV soccer team, referees for a youth league, and takes religious education classes. Another participates in several musical groups, sings in a choir, and teaches cello. She signed up for six clubs at the activities fair.

It's great that there are such a variety of opportunities at the high school. But we should be wary of overloading ourselves. Maybe it's time to step back and define what we really want to do. It's important that we occupy ourselves, but there's no reason to squeeze activities into our schedules just to impress colleges; nor should we kid ourselves into thinking we can handle doing everything that interests us. We need to enjoy these years, which are said to be some of the best in life. So do only what is most important to you. Then take a look around. There's a whole world out there that doesn't include schedules and commitments. And it's waiting.

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John Locke-out

"Due to difficulties with negotiations, the professional basketball season has been suspended indefinitely," according to the latest newspaper reports. Of course, we all know what "difficulties with negotiations" actually means, "players want their forty billion dollar signing bonuses and owners think these greedy scum are taking funds away from their waxing of their jaguars." The unfortunate truth of this whole situation is that the third party without a vote, the spectators, can do nothing but watch as the players and coaches argue over these "petty" funds.

Instead of being frustrated about this grim predicament, there are a host of other options as far as television watching goes...From down under, our friendly neighbor of the Southern Hemisphere, Australia, offers the new game of equestrian Australian Rules football. Though many scoff at the insane, fast paced play of these vicious beasts, to the die hard basketball fan, they can clearly pick out the strategy and suspense of a "no lockout" NBA game...From the beaches of Baja California, comes the first and hopefully last form of ancient pagan worship also known as rhythmic gymnastics. Few students from Lexington can forget the nonstop fun of bamboo poles, "The Heat is On" and dancing that once ruled our elementary school lives. Currently televised, this "sport" is more intensely-charged than girls field hockey and will keep your eyes glued to the set...From the heart of Judaism, the Chestnut Hill Mall, comes the only sport that is racially acceptable by a slurled name, "Jew Ball". A multitude of hard core Jews from around New England compete for the illustrious title of "New England Region United Synagogue Youth Champions" currently held by a team

from the little known city of Lexington. This basketball-like sport has all the excitement of the NBA with an added twist of yarmulkes and Kosher rules...From the back alley streets of Minnesota, comes the most rip-roaring excitement known to man: four square. Four square combines several abstract maneuvers including the Cherry Bomb, Evil Eyes and Bus Stop as competitors compete to stand in the "four square". Each "four square" team brings their own style and approach to the game making the viewing even more spectacular than the fannies of the football team...And last but not least, from the wilderness of Colombia comes the true test of agility and strength, the all-out coffee bean harvest. Far be it from Marv Albert, David Stern or even Dikembe Mutombo to deny the sheer frenzy that sets in as the mustache-sporting farmers dismount their mules and begin to reap.

In all seriousness, the departure of John Tesh's stirring "NBA on NBC" theme song, and the basketball that follows it, from the lives of vicarious athletes everywhere will be a difficult thing to accept. Still, the signs are already there that society will find new interests. Burger King has developed a specialized menu, which includes either onion rings or french fries, soap opera week on Wheel of Fortune has just ended, and Dawson's Creek continues to produce new fireworks. You'll be on the edge of your seats, basketball fans, when Joey hooks up with Jack for a second time! As the would-be basketball season wears on, we will find more innovations to keep us happy. In the meantime, there's always New England Patriots football...

-Ben Adams & Max Woolf

Are You a Slacker at Heart?

An Exclusive Forum Quiz!

Sick of being ranked "primo-perfect-mostly B's babe" by all those hackneyed YM quizzes? Well, dig out your number two pencils boys and girls, but don't count on coming out of this exam with your hands clean. And remember, you don't get 200 points for writing your name correctly in the real world.

Add one point for a 'yes' on any of the following questions:

Do you frequently . . .

1. fall asleep in class (excluding boring Bio videos)?
2. wait until the last possible minute to hand in an essay? (bonus point if you wait until the last possible second)
3. do your French/Spanish homework during math (or vice versa)?
4. leave class to get a drink/go to the bathroom? to visit other classes? for no reason?
5. pray for fire alarms/bus evacuation day?

Have you ever . . .

6. watched *Dawson's Creek*?
7. discussed the hotness quotient of Katie Holmes on more than three different occasions?
8. bought doughnuts or bagels for an entire class just to waste time? (bonus point if during a chemistry lab)
9. attempted to infiltrate a club's yearbook shop?
10. spent more than two hours creating a political cartoon/diorama/art project for a class other than art?
11. driven to New Hampshire and back during double free-block? during single free-block? during passing time?
12. thought about driving to New Hampshire and back during any of these times?
13. planned a strategy to take over the world to avoid paying attention in math?
14. killed bees by catching them in plastic bags, coke bottles, or with your bare hands?
15. found the time to compose three or more mole jokes on mole day?
16. noted that Lexington night life ends at 9:00 while driving slowly through the center at 11:30?
17. commented on the similarity in color between Vervine Chillies "Tropical Freeze" and Windex? Or perhaps, $\text{CuSO}_4(\text{aq})$?
18. stolen a street sign? (bonus point if you've stolen "Lois Ln.")
19. skipped Driver's Ed to drive to New Hampshire?
20. used a religious holiday as an excuse? a fictional one?
21. gotten through an entire school day without opening a book? writing a word? carrying a backpack?
22. gone a full school year without pur-

chasing school supplies?

23. skipped track practice to go play frisbee? and been too lazy to actually play?
24. taken walking (or honors freestyle walking) in gym? lagged behind? gotten lost?
25. relocated a friend's car (break in, shift into neutral, and push) without permission?
26. memorized lines from *The Simpsons*, *So I Married an Axe Murderer*, *Austin Powers*, or *Monty Python* but not your SAT vocabulary?
27. written a paper on less than 10% of the assigned reading? received an A?
28. set your alarm at 5:00 A.M. to wake up and do homework . . . and executed the 'dozen-snooze' maneuver?
29. hurried to Cary Library after school to socialize?
30. tried to count all the tiny holes in that ugly ceiling tile?
31. counted how many licks it takes to get the Tootsie center of a Tootsie Pop? during a biology/chemistry lab?
33. written a newspaper quiz about slackers for fun...and had it published?

Now, subtract two points for a 'yes' on any of the following questions:

34. Have you ever started a science project earlier than a month before it was due?
35. Have you never used Cliffs Notes?

Scoring:

30+ =	God/Bharat
20 - 29	Mega-Super-Ultra Slacker
15 - 19	Serious Slacker
6 - 14	Slacker
2 - 5	Closet Slacker
0 - 1	What school do you go to?
negative	Tatsuo Kusakabe

Sorry to disrupt your idyllic world of self-proposed scholarship, but (news flash!) we all suffer from some slacker tendencies, although some are admittedly more susceptible than others. Are you worried about your new status? Well, I suggest that you 1) come straight home from school and finishing your homework, 2) give studying and punctuality a try (once in a while), 3) take a YM quiz and be reassured of your merit, or 4) go back through the questions and change the answers on the 'borderline' ones. Of course, the last option categorizes you as a cheater, and if anyone catches you, they could fill out that little yellow card and turn you in to the College Entrance Examination Board. Now, don't panic; just scan the cafeteria and confirm that no one's witnessed this embarrassment. Shift your eyes to the right, feigning to read the op-ed columns, and then inconspicuously slip the evidence into your colossal L.L. Bean knapsack. I won't tell if you won't... slacker! -Molly Powers, et al.

In Review

Numerology ★★

As heard from the mouths of the Wu-Tang Clan and raving derelicts on street corners everywhere, numerology is the study of the mystical significance of numbers. Numerologists take the expression "you can use numbers to prove anything" to weird new levels. Most numerological theories are delivered orally in a wild tone of voice with lots of gesticulation, and in one long sentence, such as: "Alright, you take three--the holy trinity: mother, father, child--multiply it by twelve--twelve days of Christmas--get thirty six, a perfect square, perfect like God is perfect, take the square root, get six, on third of the devil (man is one third devil, two thirds God), add seven--seven days of Creation--get thirteen, for the thirteen points of light in Krishna's eye, multiply it by the current year, that's 1007 in real time, and you get 13091, which is the number of days of sunlight we have left before the moon takes control and we are plunged into eternal darkness." It may sound convincing, but this sort of thing really doesn't hold up under heavy scrutiny. What's more, it comes at us from all sides: from the lotto junkies at your local convenience store, from the characters in the hip independent film "Pi" at your local art-house cinema. By some definitions, even that "Peanuts" cartoon where Peppermint Patty talks about the personalities of different numbers--three is friendly, nine is mean, and so on--is numerology. It's all very strange and vaguely blasphemous.

Free to convert, but you'll pay later when you're burning in HELL.

Hidden Agenda, 1990 starring Frances McDormand ★★

I only caught the first ten minutes of this but from what I saw I can't really recommend it. Uninspired theme music, boring white-on-black opening credits. The beginning was pretty slow. I mean, this is the 90s and we're all of us busy; a movie should grab us from the get go. I was disappointed, because the box makes it seem like a real roller coaster ride.

\$3.50 to rent at West Coast Video

Crooklyn Dub Consortium: Certified Dope Volume II ★★★

If poor, angry inner city youths grow up to be rappers, poor inner city computer nerds grow up and make dub. Dub was invented by Jamaican reggae producers in the 1960s as a cheap alternative to actually recording new reggae songs; they stripped existing songs down the just the drums and bass, added in bits of the original vocals and instruments here and there. The style was appropriated during the early 90s by British ravers, and, more recently, by would-be hip-hopsters like the Crooklyn Dub Consortium. The Consortium is pretty far-removed from the trippy good-times dub vibe of old, seeming more like heavy metal for kids who would never, ever listen to heavy metal: it'll shake the house and scare your parents, but it's still pretty mellow, in its own way. "Certified Dope Volume II" is a collection of tracks from dub artists from around New York, and the prevalent format seems to be hip-hop drum loops and crazy deep bass, spiced up with creepy vocal samples and odd instrumental bits. There's also a certain amount of desperate hip-hop posturing, as if these people are painfully aware that they are not rappers and never will be. But if you can ignore such hard-core trappings (excerpt from the CD booklet: "Ayo, Nu Seeka here be droppin some phat cro-magnon dope on the fly dub tip"), this stuff will really cause a ruckus as you cruise around in your tinted-window Jetta.

\$14.98 at Newbury Comics

Slim Jim Beef Jerky ★ 1/2

The Slim Jim is the C-ration of suburbia: portable, non-perishable, indestructible, unapetizing. You can draw a lot of parallels like that between Slim Jims and bad things, such as: They're a little like unfiltered cigarettes, in that they're gross but some grizzled men and women insist on consuming them despite the obvious dangers to their health, in some sort of masochistic act of individualism. And they're a little like pornography, in that they provide a quick, empty thrill that many people think might have insidious effects on one's moral character. But enough of that, let's look at the concrete facts: the Slim Jim spokesman, seminal professional wrestler Macho Man Randy Savage is dead; Slim Jims are made from parts of a cow best left labeled "miscellaneous"; sometimes you see Slim Jims at the store and you just have to buy one and eat it, and then maybe buy another because you don't know why but you just have to, God help us all.

\$0.99 wherever processed foods are sold

-Neil Chamberlain

An Exclusive Forum Preview of 'Rags'

RAGS, Continued from page 3

and phere. Scenes flow together, overlapping eachother, aided by frozen action and an innovative set design. Although props, sets, and costumes are beautifully crafted, they appear at the bare minimum on stage, mostly offering subtle symbolic insinuation. This makes the actors jobs all the more difficult, because the stage is set primarily by the colorful characters the actors are able to develop during brief moments in the spotlight. Another appealing aspect of Rags is its amazingly challenging and ethnically distinct musical score. As usual, the orchestral pit sounds sensational, but this year, for something new, a group of Klezmers--street musicians--including a trumpet (Marius Hauser),

violin (Lida Kim), clarinet (Max Woolf), and trombone (Ben Fordsick) will wander the stage along with the actors.

Perhaps Bogart's chief interest in Rags spawns from his love for a challenge. When Rags premiered on Broadway in 1991, it was condemned as a failure and canceled after six performances, and since, has borne the brand of a dead musical. The cast, crew, and producers of LHS's show have resuscitated this lost gem, and transformed the show into a sellout block stopper. You won't want to miss this one.

Rags opens Thursday, November 19th at 8:00. It will play until Saturday, November 21st. Tickets are eight dollars and are available during lunch, before and after school, from cast members, and at the door.

Lexington Students Top Globe Survey

HOMEWORK, Continued from page 1
five hours homework a day on average. That's not including reports. This year I have less."

The difficulty in estimating how much time is actually spent on homework is a flaw inherent in the study. The Massachusetts Department of Education, which took the survey of tenth graders in 1996, asked students to figure out how much time they normally spent doing work, but the survey had no way of confirming if the answers given were really true.

Senior Cara Moultrup noted the difficulty of estimating homework time, "You spend five hours one night and half an hour the next. The [survey] numbers tell us

that Lexington students feel overworked. If nothing else, that's what they tell us."

Indeed, several students were not happy to see Lexington ranked so highly on the homework scale.

"We do tend to get a lot of homework, and some of it is just not necessary," said junior Livia Istrate. "So much homework cuts into my free time...Students need the chance to relax, you can't just expect nonstop work."

Errata

Forum would like to express its regrets to Alex Shinkel for incorrectly spelling and attributing his name to a features photograph in our October issue.



The Boys' Varsity Cross Country Team: League Champions

Photo by Brian Hemond

Boy's Cross Country Team Triumphs at Middlesex League Meet

MISHA HOROWITZ
Contributing Editor

This has been a thoroughly successful season for the Lexington boys' cross country team. From day one, the boys demonstrated the heart, stamina and outright ability it takes to be a championship team. The team continually had great performances from its hardcore runners. The boys had high hopes heading into their last regular season dual meet. There were no surprises as they continued and completed their domination over the Middlesex League competitors with a convincing victory over Burlington. As usual, Ian "Gates" Joseph and senior tricapitain "Nicholas Gun" Roetter crossed the line with a one-two finish for Lexington, finishing in 15:36 and 15:48, respectively. Unfortunately, senior tricapitain Max "Mackie" Woolf had become deathly ill and was unable to run, although he attended the meet to heroically cheer on his teammates. In fourth place, with a time of 16:17 was third senior tricapitain, Mike "Grimace" Mihovan. Senior Misha Horowitz finished sixth in 16:31, and junior Erik "the Red" Hoiris was the final scoring runner for Lexington, finishing eighth in 16:58. Sophomore Alex Popkin and junior Steve Martin also gave great performances for Lexington, finishing in 17:06 and 17:08. These were personal best times for Horowitz, Hoiris, Popkin and Martin. "The convincing win was a fitting way to close out a perfect season," said Mihovan.

The next test for the boys was the Middlesex Championship League Meet on Woburn's 2.5 mile course. The top seven runners from all ten Middlesex teams ran in this momentous event. The newly crowned Middlesex League Champs demonstrated their drive as they won the meet with a score of 52 points (the score is the sum of the top five runners' places). Stoneham finished second with 66 points. Roetter and Joseph ran, in the words of world-renowned Professor (and Lexington High alum) Steven A. Clark, "like true champions," taking second and third places (13:01 and 13:05), defeating league arch-nemesis Scotty Strandburg of Reading. Mihovan turned the heads of all the coaches, as he blew by runners left and right,

cruising to a ninth place finish (13:25). Woolf, back from the dead, finished convincingly in 16th (13:38). These top four runners received big shiny medals, as the top twenty finishers earned beautiful prizes. Horowitz came through 22nd (13:57) and Hoiris and Popkin were close behind in 24th (14:02) and 27th (14:07). "Although Max was recovering from a cold, and Misha had a broken wrist, everybody stepped it up a level to prove that we are league champs," said Peter North. Not to be outdone, juniors Alex "the Wildman" Pollen (14:25) and Steve "Terminator" Martin (14:35), and freshman Phil "Tennessee" Albright (14:43) took 1-2-3 in the Junior Varsity Championship race. Freshman Alex "Pay My User" Fee (15:02) was close behind in 8th and sophomore Aaron "Freshman" Ladd took 10th.

"We ran really well," said Woolf. "Everyone did what they had to do. Now we can begin to look ahead toward the class and state meets." Woolf was referring, of course, to the State Class A meet, to be held at Franklin Park in Boston on November 14. If the boys run well at the Class Meet, they will advance to the All State Meet in Central Massachusetts. To sum it all up, in the words of Mihovan: "we're good."

The girls' team also ended their season on an up-note, defeating Burlington at home, and taking third place in the League Meet. The win over Burlington clinched the third spot in the Middlesex League for the 1998 season. At the League Meet, the girls had great performances from the "Big Es," seniors Eleanor "E-Z-E" Finnegan and Emily "E-Smooth" Wanderer. The dynamic duo took 9th and 10th place (16:08 and 16:20). Junior Dina Mencow took 21st in 17:06, and sophomore Heather Knight came in 25th with 17:21. Rounding up the Lexington Seven were senior Lindsay Martin (37th, 17:48), Kate Shugert (44th, 18:26) and Tanya Brennan (45th, 18:27). "We were pleased with our performances," Finnegan said after her race. "We all ran hard."

Both the girls' and the boys' teams ran brilliantly at last Saturday's Franklin Park invitational meet. At this warm-up for the state class meet Joseph placed in the top ten, with Roetter close behind. For the girls, Wanderer finished seventh and Finnegan 11th. Mencow also ran a good race, finishing 32nd.

Volleyball Makes a Valiant Effort at States

ELEANOR FINNEGAN
Contributing Editor

Most recently the volleyball team started its post season, playing in the state tournament. They made it all the way to the second round before being handed a defeat by the top ranked team in the state, Dracut. The Minutemaid's first round game was against East Boston, who they easily defeated.

Lexington swept all three matches against East Boston in what was truly a team effort. In the third match, none of the regular starters were on the court, giving the whole team the opportunity to play. "We had a great team effort out there and everyone contributed to the win," said senior captain Laura Beth Chamberlain. Lisa Tsaur especially helped the team with her three kills.

The second match did not go as well for the Minutemaid's, who have been plagued by injury during their post season. One third of the starting lineup has been injured and therefore the players have been forced to play positions that they are not accustomed to. They knew that they had a tough game ahead of them, since Dracut was the top seeded team in the tournament. The girls put forward their best effort, but Dracut won all three matches.

Even though the season is over the volleyball team had a very successful season. They tied for League Champs with Lynnfield and are very excited about next year.

Oberto Captures 8th at States

SEAN JACOBS
Staff Writer

Despite the team's finishing of the golf season with a disappointing record, tri-captain Dave Oberto was still able to achieve personal recognition by finishing eighth in the state tournament in late October.

Having anchored the golf team over recent years in the number one slot, Oberto hoped to lead the team into the state tournament. Unfortunately, the team struggled throughout the early part of the season and started to click only when it was too late. Despite not making the tournament as a team, Oberto still earned the opportunity to compete in the Division I North Sectionals when he finished ahead of fellow tri-captains Ari Vigoda and Tim Carlson in the Middlesex League Shootout.

Oberto had a solid showing in Ipswich for the sectionals as he finished third out of 93 golfers which was enough to advance to the Division I championship held at Springfield Country Club. In Springfield Oberto struggled in the early going, but eventually he was able to settle down and string together a solid round of golf. Oberto's performance earned him a spot in the top ten Division I golfers, as he finished eighth out of all golfers from Division I. "I was disappointed we were unable to reach the states as a team so I went to Springfield to shoot the best score I could individually," Oberto commented on his round, "and overall I was pleased with my play in the tournaments, as had I gotten off to a better start I feel I could have finished in the top three."

Field Hockey Drops Heartbreaker to Acton-Boxboro; Takes pride in successful season

JEREMY ZANGARA
Sports Editor

The Lexington High School field hockey team had a tremendous season, losing only one game and holding a high seed in the state tournament.

In their first game, Lexington held off a tough Gloucester team to advance to the second round, where they fell to Acton-Boxboro. "We played a really good game," said Kristen Hopwood. "It was close the entire time and the game could have gone either way." In the win over Gloucester, senior Sara Wiltshire scored the only goal and Jillian Savoy and her amazing defense held Gloucester scoreless. However Lexington did not have the same luck against an Acton-Boxboro team that was playing well and also wanted a little revenge against Lexington who ousted them from the tournament last season. Lexington lost the match 3-2 with senior Maggie Allan scoring both Lexington goals. "Maggie played

so well," said tri-captain Kristen Hopwood. "She played well for us all season and it was good for her to have this kind of game." And although they were upset with the loss, they were excited about the season they had accomplished. "We played our hearts out and lost a game that could have gone either way," said senior Sara Wiltshire. "We were really happy with our season and our accomplishments because we surprised everyone including ourselves."

Senior tri-captain Kristen Hopwood was honored with the MVP award for the Middlesex League. She compiled a great season and was very deserving of this award. "It's exciting," she said. "I was really surprised." One of her biggest supporters was Adriana Schick. "She was the key to our team's success this year," she said. "She's given her all and nobody deserved it more than she did."

Kristen, Adriana, and Jillian Savoy were all named Middlesex League all-stars following their great seasons.



The Field Hockey Team challenges the opposition for possession.

Photo by Brian Hemond